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ABSTRACT

The rcle of the schccl in the fostering of competence and psychological well-being in students is of primary concern to school psychologists. Adolescents' involvement in high school extracurricular activities was examined to determine their effect on socialization and possible relationships with demographic patterns and high school performance. A questionnaire administered tc New England high school students showed that students whc were from high socioeconomic status families and were seniors were most involved. Student involvement was related to school experience and performance, including academic success. The findings offer some support fcr considering involvement as a mediating variable. (Author/JAC)

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STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

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Paper presented as part of the Symposium, "Relating Problem-Solving and Involvement to High School Performance and Experience", at the 89th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, August 1981

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Abstract

Adolescents' involvement in the high school extracurricular program was studied to determine the role such involvement plays in adolescent socialization. The first aspect of the study was designed to determine whether or not demographic patterns exist among students who are involved in the extracurriculum. The second aspect was designed to determine the relationships between students' levels of involvement and high school experience and performance. A third aspect was designed to determine the extent to which involvement mediates between demographic characterstics and student experience and performance. A questionnaire was administered to 293 students during a class period in their New England high school. The results provided a clear-cut portrait of which students become involved--students from high SES families and twelfth graders. Student involvement was found to be significantly related to school experience and performance, including academic success. Some support was found for considering involvement as a mediating variable. The results are discussed in relation to educational practice, psychological theory, and the practice of school and community psychology.

Student Involvement and the Psychological Experience of the High School

Psychologists have been concerned with the fostering of competence and psychological well-being in children and adolescents. Considerable efforts have been directed toward the major settings in which children live, grow and develop, and in which they are socialized. The role of the school in the lives of children is of primary and definitional importance to school psychologists. Bardon (1968), in fact, defined school psychology as that specialty of applied psychology concerned with the interactions between children and their schools. Community psychologists, likewise, have become interested in the school. Community psychology is concerned with the prevention of psychological distress and the enhancement of psychological well-being and competence (Heller & Monahan, 1977) which has led to a priority for working with children (Glidewill, 1971). Further, the community psychologist's commitment to intervene at organizational and community levels (Goodstein & Sandler, 1978; Heller & Monahan, 1977), has focused attention on the school as a setting in which to foster the socialization of competent children. This study was undertaken within this orientation of school and community psychology. Its purpose was to explore the relationships between high school students' involvement in extracurricular activities and their psychological experience of and performance in the school.

Involvement was chosen as the central variable to be studied because of its important theoretical and empirical link to the socialization of competence. The psychological study of involvement dates at least from

Gordon Allport's classic essay, "The Psychology of Participation" (1945), in which he suggested that ". . . in studying participation the psychologist has an approach to the complete person" (p. 130). Allport recognized the importance of ego-involved participation to the understanding of individual personalities and to the functioning of a democratic society. Several theorists have related this construct of involvement to the development of competent individuals.

Robert W. White (1959, 1960, 1963) defined competence as the fitness and ability of the child to be an active participant in interaction with the environment. J. McV. Hunt (1969) viewed competence as a prerequisite for meaningful involvement in society. White (1963) and M. Brewster Smith (1968) theorized that competence results from effective involvement with the environment. Further, Smith singled out the school as a crucial environment for the socialization of competence through effective student involvement.

Extracurricular activities were selected as the specific school settings in which to study involvement because of their importance in the high school socialization process. American high schools serve numerous functions. In addition to academic instruction they also provide for students' socialization. "High schools are . . . given considerable responsibility for developing attitudes, expectations, and skills that will prepare students for adult social and occupational roles" (Deal & Roper, 1979, p. 15). The program of extracurricular activities in the typical American high school provides on major setting for the socialization of competence in these roles.

Psychological Studies of High School Involvement

Roger Barker and his colleagues have studied the effects of ecological phenomena on the experience of children and youth (Barker & Gump, 1964; Gump, 1978; Wicker, 1968, 1969; Willems, 1967). In their study of the

behavior settings of the high school, Barker and Gump (1964) related school size to the behavior of students. They reported that students from small schools participated in a much wider range of settings, were twice as likely to be active participants, and received direct (rather than vicarious) satisfaction from their competencies in those settings.

Kelly and his colleagues have studied the ecosystem of the high school and have discussed adolescent socialization in terms of ecological variables (Kelly, 1970, 1979). Their hypothesis was that students' adaptation to school would be determined by students' preferences for exploratory behavior (a person variable referred to as a coping style) and the opportunities within the environment to express these preferences which were expected to vary by turnover rate (an environmental variable). In a recent volume by Kelly and his collaborators (Kelly, 1979), some of the results of this longitudinal, multi-method investigation were reported. This research program produced significant results for the exploratory preference variable, defined as "preferences for trying out alternative behaviors and sampling diverse social situations in high schools" (Kelly, 1970, p. 132), indicating that students with high exploratory preferences:

1. were more competent in their participation in school activities and more confident of their ability to influence others (Gilmore, 1979);
2. had greater identification with school, took greater initiative in school, were happier with school, had higher self-esteem and self-satisfaction, and had fewer social problems (Edwards, 1979a, 1979b); and
3. gave more elaboration of solutions to problems, gave more information, made better use of their partners as problem-solving resources, had greater task involvement, and directed more interactions related to the solutions of problems (Jones, 1979).

Hurley and his collaborators have extended the ecological conception of environment to that of perceived environment. They have studied community residents' psychological experience of their community (Hurley, Note 1,

Note 2, note 3; Hurley, Nover, Plummer, & Solomon, Note 4; Mitchell, Barbarin, & Hurley, In press). To date, research efforts using community residents' perceptions of their community have yielded the following significant results:

1. Adults with roles reflecting different levels of community involvement reported different experiences of community culture and process (Hurley, Note 3; Mitchell et al., In press).
2. Adolescents had a much infereior relationship with the community than adults in that they reported less satisfaction with the community and less likelihood of receiving support from their neighbors (Hurley et al., Note 4).
3. Adolescents were less involved than adults in formal community processes; and more likely to rely on informal and self-resources (Hurley et al., Note 4).
4. Female students in the upper high school grades showed greater problem-solving competence by:
   a. identifying a greater number of alternative solutions;
   b. reporting greater personal involvement in problem-solving; and
   c. reporting greater access and involvement in the community's formal resources (Hurley et al., Note 4).

These studies have found that community involvement, relflected in different community roles, in the different community status of adolescets and adults, and in sex and age differences among adolescents, is related to a significantly different psychological experience of that community. Further, the psychological experience of community reflects community process, e.g., problem-solving competencies, associated with psychological well-being and mental health.

While these data provide an interesting account of adolescent experience of their community, they do not illuminate the adolescents' experience of a specific setting in which they are expected to be highly involved. This approach was applied to this study of the high school as a social setting or community. The application of this approach to the study of high school students may provide data helpful to the understanding of how high school students experience a setting in which they are among the principal inhabi-

tants and which is directly related to their growth and development.

Psychological Studies of Adult Work Involvement

In the preceding discussion involvement was related to adolescent socialization in the high school. Additional theoretical and empirical work relevant to this study has been done with adult involvement on the job. This literature is discussed at this point because the theoretical and empirical findings are relevant to the study of involvement as a psychological construct and to the study of the socialization of involvement. Recently, two major leterature reviews have appeared which critically surveyed the available data regarding adult work involvement.

Rabinowitz and Hall (1977) and Kanungo (1979) reported evidence to support the notion that job involvement is a relatively stable characteristic. Both review stress the importance of early socialization experiences in the acquisition of values and beliefs and salient needs that are satisfied through involvement. Rabinowitz and Hall found that involvement, rather than a cause or an effect of job behavior, functions in some mediating or feedback capacity. Kanungo's model suggests that person's perceptions about the potential of the setting to satisfy his or her salient needs provides a similar feedback capacity that is capable of modifying those needs, at least in relation to a particular setting. In this study the involvement construct was applied to adolescent behavior in the high school. If involvement is an important variable in personality development and strongly related to competence, and further, if it is fostered in the socialization experiences of youth, then the study of involvement in the major socialization setting of youth - the high school, should provide insight and understanding of this construct, as well as conceptual and empirical comparisons to involvement in adult settings.

Rationale and Hypotheses

What has been lacking in the literature of high school socialization is a conceptual model that provides a comprehensive framework for the study of involvement. A framework of involvement, based on Kanungo's (1979) model of job involvement, has been adapted and simplified to provide a conceptual basis for this research. This model is presented in Figure 1. It begins with the cultural, organizational, and group norms that are transmitted in the socialization process. This process, occurring in the family, neighborhood, and other socialization settings including the school itself, provides behavioral, attitudinal, and motivational norms which can reflect the differing expectations for and value placed on involved behavior in the school. The socialization experiences of students of varying socioeconomic status (SES), of boys versus girls, and of students with the organizational status differences associated with the different high school grade levels (e.g., consider the connotation of differential status inherent in the term "Freshman" versus "Senior") may be related to differential school involvement or the differential participation of students in the social settings of the school.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Unlike Kanungo's definition of involvement as a motivational belief state, involvement was defined here interms of its behavioral manifestation--the participation of students in school settings. Further, this model suggests that differential involvement in school settings is related to differential psychological experiences of the school and differential academic and social performance in the school. Feedback that a student

receives from his or her involvement, in terms of social approval or the effects of his or her actions themselves, provides the student with perceptions about the future likelihood of success in that setting. That perception then serves a feedback function by providing information capable of modifying the previously held expectations for involved behavior.

The person's expectations for involvement in the school environment are initially related to prior socialization experiences (historical antecedents) and then modified by feedback concerning the psychological experience and performance in the current environment (contemporaneous antecedents). The person's involvement in school is thus conceptualized as partly related to prior socialization and partly related to the contemporary experience and performance in the school. It is suggested that involvement plays a crucial mediating role, i.e., mediates between prior socialization and contemporary experience. Further, the mediating role provides the basis for confirmation or disconfirmation of the socialized values related to involved behavior that can affect expectations for future involvement.

This model provides the basis to determine how students with different attributes (e.g., age, sex, SES, status) participate in school settings and how involvement relates to the psychological experience of and performance in school. It was the purpose of this study to explore these relationships.

From this rationale, the following variables were selected for inclusion in this study. The demographic or student attribute variables of sex, grade level, and SES were included in order to reflect the potentially different socialization experience attributable to different group membership. Involvement, the major variable of this study, refers to student participation in the various extracurricular activities of the high school. Students'

psychological experience of the school is reflected in the variables of satisfaction (Kanungo's affective state of involvement), perceived involvement (Kanungo's cognitive state of involvement or identification with the setting), perceived adaptive role, and perceived influence. The variables reflecting school performance included academic performance and social network support.

The first question addressed by this study was whether or not discernible patterns exist in the characteristics of students who are involved in the various activities available in the high school. Thus, the first hypothesis was stated:

> First hypothesis. The amount of student involvement and the kinds of involvement would vary for students of different sex, grade level, and SES.

The second question addressed in this research was whether or not specific relationships exist between involvement and student psychological experience of and performance in the school. Thus, the second hypothesis stated:

> Second hypothesis. The amount of involvement would be related to different student experiences of and performance in the school.

A third question was asked in order to test directly the suggestion that involvement would mediate between the demographic variables and the psychological experience of and performance in the school. Therefore, the relationships between the demographic variables of SES, sex, and grade, and students' experience of and performance in the school were studied directly to examine the results without involvement intervening in its conceptualized mediational capacity. Thus, the third hypothesis stated:

> Third hypothesis. Differences in student experience of and performance in the school would vary in only limited and isolated ways for students of different sex, grade level, and SES.

Method

Subjects

A sample of 293 students were drawn from the total population of 900 in a semi-rural/suburban four year high school in southeastern New England. There were 96 ninth graders (32.8%), 75 tenth graders (25.6%), 67 eleventh graders (22.9%), and 51 twelfth graders(17.4%). Four cases, or 1.4% of the sample, were unable to be categorized by grade due to missing data. Of the total sample 126 (43%) were boys; 163 (55.6%) were girls; and 4 (1.4%) could not be categorized by sex due to incomplete data. Finally, 135 (46.1%) were categorized as high SES and 133 (45.4%) were categorized as low SES. SES data were missing for 25 participants (8.5%) of the sample.

All procedures for subject sampling and participation were negotiated with the superintendent of school's office and with the high school principal. The sampling procedure negotiated designated groups of students to be selected for this study as they rotated through their normally scheduled study hall period. All students in the school were scheduled for at least one study hall period per day. Study halls were conducted simultaneously in the school library and in the school cafeteria. Student sampling occurred over a two day period, during which students were surveyed in both study hall settings. The students participated only after an explanation of the project had been offered and their voluntary consent to participate had been obtained. Student confidentiality was maintained. There was no reason to expect that significant differences on dimensions potentially critical to this study would result from this sampling procedure.

Measures[1]

Sex, grade, and SES. The measurement of the student demographic variables of sex, grade, and SES dependes upon student self-reports on respective questionnaire items. Student SES was based on the SES of students' families. It was determined by Hollingshead's Two Factor Index of Social Position (Hollingshead, Note 5). This required students to report their parents' occupation and education. When the occuapation and educational levels between parents differed, the highest relative status for occupation and education was used. SES, a continuous variable which ranges from a score of 11 (highest SES) to a score of 77 (lowest SES), was dichotomized to provide two groups - high and low SES. The decision to dichotomize the variable was made after assessing the frequency distribution of the variable. A median split (median = 26.39) produced a high SES group which corresponded to Hollingshead's social class categories I and II (n = 135). The low SES group thus corresponded to Hollingshead's social class categories III, IV, and V (n = 133).

Involvement. The standard format used to measure students' involvement or participation in school social settings is an activity checklist (Matheny, Anderson, & Blue, 1978; McDill & Rigsby, 1973; National Association for Secondary School Principals, 1966; Yarmouth & Gauthier, 1978). In this study, student involvement was determined by students' self-report of their engagement in school activities on an activity checklist adapted from McDill and Rigsby (1973). Four measures of involvement were derived: (a) current involvement - the number of activities in which students were engaged during the current academic year; (b) total hours per week - the average number of hours a student estimated were spent each week in school activities; (c) offices held - the number of current leadership positions,

e.g., club officer or team captain, held by a student; and (d) kind of activity - the categories of activities in which students were engaged.

The variable current involvement, which ranged from a low score of zero to a high score of five, was trichotomized to provide three levels of involvement. Three levels of involvement were selected after the distribution was assessed. Three groupings of students that made sense intuitively were supported empirically by the distribution of the variable. A group of 112 students, or 39%, were not involved in any activity. A group of 77 students, or 26.8%, were involved in only one activity. Another group of 98 students, or 34.2%, were involved in two to five (i.e., more than one) activities. Thus when current involvement served as an attribute (independent) variable for the ANOVA procedures, the trichotomized current involvement categories or levels of involvement were used.

Satisfaction. Students' satisfaction with school was assessed by student self-report on six items used by Ellison and Trickett (1976) and Trickett and Moos (1974). These items required the student to respond on a seven point Likert scale ranging from very dissatisfied to extremely satisfied. Following the commonly used procedure for measuring school satisfaction, a general statement of satisfaction with school was included, along with statements of satisfaction with specific components of the school: teachers, personal goals, peers, how school is run, and guidance counseling. A seventh item, taken from the Annual Gallup Poll of Education (New York Times, August 26, 1979), required students to "grade" the quality of their school by assigning the grade A, B, C, D, or Fail.

Perceived influence on the school. This measure was adapted from one used by Rice and Marsh (1979) to measure perceptions of groups influencing

school policy. Using a five point Likert scale, students were asked to decide how much influence each of the following groups have on the operation of the school: school board, central administration, the principal, teachers, students, parents, taxpayers, and teacher unions. This measure is similar to the perceived influence scale developed by Hurwitz (1968) to measure perceptions about the power of others to influence one's opinion or judgement.

Perceived involvement. Using the format employed in major sociological studies by Coleman (1961) and McDill and Rigsby (1973), students were presented with a set of five concentric circles, with the center representing the center of things in school. Students were asked how far out from the center of things they believe they are. In a second item using another set of circles, students were asked to indicate where they would like to be, relative to the center of things in school. Three scores were derived -- students' perceptions of their actual involvement, their ideal perception, and a measure of the congruence or "fit" between their actual and ideal perceptions.

Adaptive role functions. This measure was used by Edwards (1979a) to measure the five categories of adaptive roles developed by Carlson (1964). Carlson described these categories along a continuum ranging from the most adaptive "receptive" role, i.e., one who enjoys all aspects of school, including activities and classes; to the "side-payment" role, i.e., one who comes to school for the extracurricular activities; to the "rebellious" role, i.e., one who challenges and attempts to change the school system; to the "social" role, i.e., one who comes to school just to be with friends; to the least adaptive "passive" or "withdrawn" role, i.e., one who reflects

the physically present but mentally absent. Edwards' (1979a) measure required the student to select one of five categorical statements that best described how they felt about school. Edwards' data suggested that this measure reliably sorted students into categories reflecting the varied match between student and environment. Edwards found that students sorted into these five categories differed significantly on measures of self-esteem, social problems, perceptions of others, opportunity, and identification and satisfaction with school (1979a).

Academic performance. Students were asked to pick the grade A, B, C, D, or Fail that best described their overall work in school. Students were also asked to report the number of marking periods that they made the honor roll. Finally, students were asked if they plan to attend college. Responses were categorized "Yes," "No," and "Undecided."

Social network support. A measure of social network reported by Mitchell (Note 6, Note 7) was included here as an index of social performance. This measure provides data on the qualitiative properties of social network, i.e., instrumentality, multidimensionality, and reciprocity, and the descriptive properties of social networks, i.e., kind of relationship and kind of social support. This measure required students to identify the four persons in the school to whom they felt closest, or whom they felt are most important to them. They then indicated the kind of relationship, i.e., peer, teacher, or other adult. Next the student indicated whether they rely on that person to provide material assistance, emotional support, and/or companionship. The multidimensionality of the network, indicated by the number of relationships that provided for more than one kind of support received (score from 0 to 4), the instrumentality of relationships, or the extent to which other members of the network rely on the student

(score 0 to 12), and reciprocity of relationships, or the extent to which support is both received and provided (0 to 12), have been found to distinguish: (a) the degree of psychological effectiveness between "clinical" and "normal" populations (Tolsdorf, 1976); and (b) the ability to solve problems connected with life transition (Hirsch, Note 8). Further, this measure provided categorical information about the three kinds of relationships (peer, teacher, or other adult) and the six kinds of support (material assistance, emotional support, companionship -- received and provided).

Procedures

The actual administration of the survey instrument occurred in the high school cafeteria on one day and in the high school library on a second day. The same procedure was used in both settings. As students entered these study hall settings a school administrator or teacher obtained the students' attention and introduced the investigator and a colleague who provided assistance. A brief introduction to the study was given by the investigator. Students were given the opportunity to choose to participate. If they voluntarily chose to participate a copy of the questionnaire was provided along with a pencil. The investigator and his colleague were available throughout each study hall period to answer questions, to clarify the written instructions, and to collect the completed questionnaire. Students were thanked for their cooperation.

Results[2]

Demographic Patterns of Involvement

A 2 X 2 X 4 ANOVA (SES by sex by grade) was computed for each of the two continuous measures of involvement (current involvement, not trichotomized and total hours per week) in order to test the hypothesis that the

amount of student involvement would vary for students of different SES, sex, and grade level. Significant main effects were analyzed with the Newman--Keuls procedure, while significant interactions were analyzed with simple effects tests (Winer, 1971). Chi square analyses were conducted on the categorical variables (offices held and kind of activity) to further determine patterns of involvement. These results are summarized in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

The following patterns of involvement were found. High SES students were significantly more likely than low SES students to participate in school activities, to spend a greater amount of time engaged in those activities, and were more likely to be involved in activities associated with academics, athletics, and the arts. The high school seniors were significantly more involved in school activities than were lower classmen and more likely to hold the leadership positions in the school. Finally, high school boys were found to participate significantly more frequently in sports than were high school girls, while girls participated significantly more frequently than boys in the arts and in academic activities.

Demographic Patterns of Students' Experience of and Performance in the School

Patterns of students' psychological experience of and performance in the school for the demographic variables were determined. The hypothesis that differences in student experience and performance would vary in only limited and isolated ways for students of different sex, grade level, and SES was tested in a series of three way ANOVAs (SES by sex by grade) for the continuous variables. The same follow-up tests were used. Chi square

analyses were conducted on the categorical variables. These results are summarized in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

The following demographic patterns of students' psychological experience of their school were found: High SES students were found to report greater satisfaction with school and greater likelihood of choosing an adaptive role. Eleventh graders were more satisfied with school than students in other grades, while tenth graders were more satisfied with the guidance counseling in the school. Eleventh graders perceived teachers to have greater influence upon what happens in school than did tenth graders. Twelfth graders perceived themselves to be closer to the center of things in school than did ninth graders (perceived actual involvement); while twelfth graders reported greater congruence between actual and ideal perceived involvement than did ninth or eleventh graders. Similarly, tenth graders reported greater congruence than did ninth graders. Several isolated higher order interaction effects were found for the perceived influence of the school board (9th grade, high SES boys > 9th grade, low SES boys, the perceived influence of the principal (11th grade girls > 11th grade boys), and the perceived influence of students (10th grade, low SESboys > 10th grade high SES boys or 10th grade, low SES girls). Finally, eleventh grade high SES students had greater ideal perceived involvement than did eleventh grade low SES students.

The following demographic patterns of students' performance in the school were found: High SES students report higher grades, reater honor roll membership, and were more likely to plan to attend college. Twelfth

graders had better grades and greater membership on the honor roll than other students. Also, girls had greater membership of the honor roll than did boys. Girl students reported greater qualitative and quantitative aspects of their social network support; they had greater multidimenionality, instrumentality, and reciprocity; they were more likely than boys to relate to peers and to teachers; and they were more likely to report all kinds of social network support. High SES boys reported greater multidimensionality than did low SES boys, and low SES girls reported greater multidimensionality than did low SES boys. Finally, eleventh graders were more likely to relate to teachers.

Involvement and Students' Experience of and Performance in the School

To test the hypothesis that the amount of student involvement would be related to different student experience and performance, a series of one-way ANOVAs with three levels of involvement was calculated for the continuous variables and chi square analyses were calculated for the categorical variables. These results are presented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

The results for the relationships between involvement and the psychological experience of and performance in the school indicate that a strong relationship has been found. Students involved in their school's activities were significantly more satisfied with school in general, their teachers, their school meeting their personal goals, their peers, and how their school is run. Involved students also gave their school a significantly higher overall evaluation. Involved students attributed greater influence

to the school board, the administration, the principal, and the teachers. They perceived themselves to be closer to the center of things in school and desired to be closer to the center. Involved students had more positive roles, i.e., receptive and side-payment, while uninvolved students had more negative roles, i.e., rebellious and withdrawn. Involved students were significantly more likely to get better grades, be on the honor roll, and plan to attend college. Finally, involved students were more likely to have social relationships with adults in the school.

Demographic Variables Versus Involvement

A review of the results suggests that the differences in student experience and performance accounted for by the demographic variables are limited and isolated when compared to the more extensive differences on the same measures accounted for by the three levels of involvement. Quite clearly, student involvement in school activities had quite a pervasive relationship to school experience and performance. However, the relationship between the domgraphic variables and the involvement variables relative to the ability to account for the variance in the psychological experience of and performance in the school has not yet been assessed directly.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to obtain the relative contribution of the demographic variables and involvement. It is recognized "that when predictors are correlated, their relative contributions to the predictability of the criterion depend heavily on the order of their appearance in the regression equation " (Lindeman, Marenda, & Gold, 1980, p. 126). Therefore, the procedure for assessing the relative contribution of predictors recommended by Lindeman et al. (1980) was used. The variable academic grades was used as the criterion. The predictor variable, students' sex, was not included in this procedure because of its relative insignificance.

The three predictors, SES, grade level, and current involvement were retained. $R^2 = .123$ was calculated for each of the six possible orderings of the predictors. The percentage of contribution of each predictor in each ordering was calculated, as was the mean percentage of contribution of each predictor. The results of this procedure are reported in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

This analysis indicates that of the total variance accounted for by these variables, on the average SES contributed 50.09%, grade level 14.07%, and current involvement 35.85%. While SES appears to be the best predictor of academic grades from this set of predictors, it is clear that involvement adds substantially to the predictability of academic grades.

A further comparison of the effects of the demographic variables relative to involvement is summarized for all of the criterion variables in Table 5. This comparison indicates that differences in school experience and performance do exist for students involved in the activities program of the school; and further, that many of these differences cannot be accounted for by the demographic variables alone.

Insert Table 5 about here

Discussion

This study has provided an initial exploration of a conceptual model of high school students' involvement in the extracurricular activities of the school. The model suggests that students' involvement mediates between prior socialization experiences, which provide various expectations for

active engagement or participation in the social settings of the school, and contemporary experience of and performance in the school. The results provide preliminary support for this model.

Of greatest interest is the striking SES finding which is so consistent with the findings reported by Brophy (1975), Bowles and Gintis (1976), Getzels (1969), Glidewell (1978), Graham (1964), and Hanks and Eckland (1976). High SES students are more involved in school and have a more positive experience of their school, as well as greater academic performance. Of the five significant higher order interactions found, four involved an SES difference and of these all favored high SES students. Further, a powerful combination is found when the SES effect for involvement is compared to the absence of an SES effect for perceived involvement. No difference was found between low and high SES students on the measures of perceived involvement. Although high SES students were more involved, they did not perceive themselves to be closer to the center of things in school. Their ideal perceived involvement and congruence were likewise not different for low SES students. More interestingly, although low SES students were significantly less involved, this created no tension for them: Low SES students did not desire to be closer to the center of things in school than they actually perceived themselves to be. Low SES students are less involved and apparently are satisfied to remain so. However, the negative consequences are likely reflected in the poor satisfaction with school and poor academic performance of the low SES students.

An interesting pattern of social performance in the school was discovered in the social network support findings. High school girls reported a pervasive, superior use of social network support in the school. This effect was found on all five measures of social network support. The high

school girls reported more multiple, instrumental, and reciprocal social supports in their relationships; more support of each kind measured; and more relationships with peers and teachers than did high school boys. This finding may have resulted from a sex-related demand characteristic; girls may have felt freer than boys in reporting their use of social network support. Or, this finding, like the findings of girls' involvement in art and academic activities but not in athletic activities, may provide further evidence suggesting that sex differences reflect societal sex-role stereotypes. Stein and Bailey (1973) reviewed the literature on achievement motivation and achievement related behavior in females and examined the hypothesis that the goal of female achievement is affiliation. They concluded:

> that attainment of excellence is often a goal of females' achievement efforts, but the areas in which such attainment is sought are frequently social skills and other areas perceived as feminine. (p. 363)

Thus, it should not come as a surprise to find high school girls demonstrating superior social skills in the use of social network support.

How this sex difference in affiliative striving develops is not entirely clear, although Hoffman's (1977) speculation is most plausible based on available evidenc:

> Females in the United States tend to be less aggressive, more affiliative--oriented or nurturing, more empathic, less independent in their coping style, and less motivationally pitched toward outside-the-home occupations. These characteristics, I think, reflect a socialization process - similar across cultures - which assumes that women will spend most of their adult life engaged in motherhood. It is not a conscious, planned socialization, but a socialization that has evolved. (p. 647)

The high school, as an institution of socialization, ould appear to be furthering the societal sex-role stereotypes in which females are expected to be more affiliative, nurturing, and empathic than are males. The negative pay-off for males is obvious. Without the comparable social

network support of girls, the high school boys are losing the valuable benefits associated with affiliation and nurturance. The role of social support available from one's social network in the maintenance of positive mental health and the ability to solve problems in living is only now being discovered. But it is clear that high school boys are in a disadvantageous position relative to girls in their ability to benefit from the the social support in their high school social networks. Further, to the extent that high school experiences socialize adolescents into adult roles, the sex differences found in high school social network support may be contributing to inferior preparation for successful adult interpersonal relationships.

One important social network support finding with regard to high school involvement was reported on the qualitative variable - kind of relationship. Not surprisingly, students involved in extracurricular activities were more likely to report relationships with non-teacher adults in the school than students not involved in those activities. Yon (1963) has discussed the value of school activities in fostering social growth through adolescent - adult relationships which are not possible in the classroom. He speculated that such relationships are associated with the development of competence, trust, and the promotion of mental health. If such relationships are related to competence, mental health, or other positive outcomes, it is clear that those students not involved in school activities have little exposure to these potential benefits.

The accumulated evidence suggests that a cluster of variables may be related to involvement in high schools, and perhaps in adult occuapational and community life as well. Most apparent is the relationship between SES and involvement. Academic aptitude, prior academic achievement, contemp-

orary academic performance, and future educational attainment may be related to involvement as well. Speculatively, one can envision a coping style similar to the exploratory preference discussed by Kelly (1970). An involved coping style might extend the exploratory preference which Kelly defined as the "preference for trying out alternative behaviors and sampling diverse social situations" (1970, p. 132) to a preference for actively and meaningfully engaging the social settings of one's environment. Such a coping style may very likely be fostered in childhood socialization experiences, most noticeably among middle and upper-class families. In fact, the expectations and values for active involvement in school, which this study has supported, are fostered among those with higher SES and may be one part of a more generalized coping style evidenced in any number of important settings, e.g., family, church, job, community-groups, etc.

The theoretical imprtance of active and meaningful involvement in the social settings of our communities and the broader society are clear. Allport (1945) and Dewey (1946, 1975) both emphasized the importance of an involved citizenry for the survival of a democratic society. Hunt (1969), Smith (1968), and White (1959, 1960, 1963, 1979) have all discussed the importance of involvement to the development of competence, or the ability to function with success in our society. However, as Hunt (1969) has noted, competence and involvement in our society are limited to the affluent middle and upper classes.

As this study has shown, those students from lower SES families were less involved in the school settings and had less positive experience of and performance in the school. Further, it is important to note how many high school students of whatever SES do not participate. In this study,

39% of the surveyed students were not involved in any activity, and only 13.54% of the students held leadership positions. Yarworth and Gauthier (1978) similarly reported with concern that 37.6% of their student sample did not participate at all. Gilmore (1979) was likewise concerned with the limited participation of adolescents in the high school:

> One problematic issue is highlighted - the difficulties students experience in engaging the environments. Though this difficulty is reflected in various ways, the present data emphasize the limited degree to which students exercise their competencies in schools. (p. 129)

Wood (1978) studied factors affecting school involvement of the disadvantaged students and concluded that disadvantaged students, even when involved, did not want to take on leadership positions. In a related study, Bell (1967) found that prior to leaving school, high school dropouts were characterized by their lack of participation in school extracurricular activities. Draeger (1973) attempted to increase student participation in school activities in a six month intervention. His efforts were unsuccessful. Draeger provided six reasons given by students for their nonparticipation: (a) activities were not interesting; (b) friends do not participate; (c) activities outside of school are more attractive; (d) outside jobs interfere; (e) general lack of interest in school; and (f) the cost was too high. He reported the first reason listed to be the most important.

One must question the role that high schools play in providing socialization experiences disigned to prepare adolescents for adult roles. Educators contend that school activities provide: Experience in leadership roles and adult-like activities; exposure to a broad range of possible vocational and avocational experiences; and opportunities for success,

social growth, and the development of competence (Graham, 1964; Yov, 1963). However, a sizeable proportion of students appears not tobe involved in school activities. Perhaps these adolescents are receiving comparable socialization experiences in community settings outside the school; or perhaps they are not getting them at all. In fact, the school may be simply providing a setting for middle and upper class students, already socialized to be involved, in order that thej can manifes that coping style. Clearly, a lower SES student's opportunity to participate will be reduced significantly if family economic circumstances require an after-school job or if fees are chared for school activities.

In recent years, school and community psychologists have sought wide scale preventive interventions that could foster the psychological well-being and competence of children and adolescents. This research has been an initial effort toward that goal. However, it is clear that the results of this study do not provide a basis for such interventions. One might speculate that the manipulation of the school environment in general and the extracurricular program in particular, might result in more positive psychological experience of and performance in the school. One might speculate further whether the correlates to involvement found here would be related to important future indices of competence. But the data collected and analyzed here provide only an initial portrait of high school involvement. The potential for psychological interventions will depend on considerable future research in this area.

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Footnotes

[1]A separate test--retest reliability study was conducted with the questionnaire used in this study. Acceptable reliabity coefficients were obtained. Full reliability data, as well as a copy of the survey instrument, are available from the author upon request.

[2]Prior to conducting any ANOVA procedure the homogeneity of variance of the dependent measure was tested with the F_{MAX} test (Winer, 1971). All dependent measures used were found to have homogeneous variances or were transformed so that the assumption of homogeneity of variance would not be violated. Means, standard deviations, and number of valid cases included in each procedure are available upon request.

Table 1

Differences in Involvement by SES, Sex, and Grade

Continuous Involvement Variables	df	F	Effect
Current Involvement			
SES	1, 252	15.94**	High > Low
Sex	------	N.S.	----
Grade	3, 252	5.77**	12th > 9th, 10th, 11th
Interactions	------	N.S.	----
Total Hours per Week			
SES	1, 220	7.61**	High > Low
Sex	------	N.S.	----
Grade	------	N.S.	----
Interactions	------	N.S.	----
Categorical Involvement Variables	**df**	**χ^2**	**Effect**
Office Holders			
SES	------	N.S.	----
Sex	------	N.S.	----
Grade	3	21.58**	12th > 9th, 10th, 11th
Kind of Activity			
SES	2	6.77**	High > academic, athletic, art
Sex	2	9.34**	Males > athletic Female > academic, art
Grade	------	N.S.	----

** $p < .01$

Table 2

Differences in the Experience of and Performance in the School by SES, Sex, and Grade

Variable	Effect			
	SES	Sex	Grade	Interaction
Satisfaction				
General	*	N.S.	**	N.S.
Teachers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Goals	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Peers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
How School is Run	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Guidance	N.S.	N.S.	**	N.S.
Overall Evaluation	**	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Influence				
School Board	**	N.S.	N.S.	*[a]
Administration	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Principal	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	*[b]
Teachers	N.S.	N.S.	**	N.S.
Students	N.S.	N.S.	**	*[c]
Parents	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Taxpayers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Unions	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Perceived Involvement				
Actual	N.S.	N.S.	*	N.S.
Ideal	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	*[d]
Congruence	N.S.	N.S.	*	N.S.
Adaptive Role	**	N.S.	N.S.	----

Table 2

(Continued)

Variable	Effect			
	SES	Sex	Grade	Interaction
Academic Performance				
Grades	**	N.S.	**	N.S.
Honor Roll	**	*	**	N.S.
College Plans	**	N.S.	**	----
Social Network				
Multidimensionality	*	*	N.S.	**[e]
Instrumentality	N.S.	*	N.S.	N.S.
Reciprocity	N.S.	**	N.S.	N.S.
Kind of Relationship	N.S.	*	**	----
Kind of Support	N.S.	**	N.S.	----

[a] 9th grade, high SES boys > 9th grade, low SES boys

[b] 11th grade girls > 11th grade boys

[c] 10th grade, low SES boys > 10th grade, high SES boys and low SES girls

[d] 11th grade high SES > 11th grade low SES

[e] High SES boys > Low SES boys

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 3

Differences in the Experience of and Performance in the School by Three Levels of Involvement

Variable	Three Levels of Involvement[a]		Follow-up Comparison of Levels[c]
	df	F/χ^2 Values[b]	
Satisfaction			
General	2, 281	15.78**	M,1 > 0
Teachers	2, 282	4.98**	M > 1,0
Goals	2, 281	2.95*	M > 0
Peers	2, 277	3.97*	M > 0
How School is Run	2, 278	9.89**	M,1 > 0
Guidance	2, 279	1.85	M = 1 = 0
Overall Evaluation	2, 282	9.82**	M,1 > 0
Influence			
School Board	2, 279	9.91**	M,1 > 0
Administration	2, 277	7.57**	M > 0
Principal	2, 279	9.03**	M,1 > 0
Teachers	2, 278	8.26**	M,1 > 0
Students	2, 281	2.33	M = 1 = 0
Parents	2, 277	.69	M = 1 = 0
Taxpayers	2, 278	.40	M = 1 = 0
Unions	2, 269	.92	M = 1 = 0
Perceived Involvement			
Actual	2, 278	27.24**	M > 1 > 0
Ideal	2, 278	9.39**	M > 1 > 0
Congruence	2, 278	11.33**	M > 1 > 0
Adaptive Role	8	50.14**	M > 1,0 for Receptive

Table 3

(Continued)

Variable	Three Levels of Involvement[a]		Follow-up Comparisons of Levels[c]
	df	F/χ^2 Values[b]	
			M > 1 > 0 for Side Payment 0 > 1,M for Rebellious, Withdrawn
Academic Performance			
Grades	2, 281	17.81**	M > 1 > 0
Honor Roll	2, 280	12.98**	M,1 > 0
College Plans	4	46.53**	M > 1,0 for Plan to Attend 0 > 1,M for Do Not Plan to Attend, Undecided
Social Network			
Multidimensionality	2, 268	1.66	M = 1 = 0
Instrumentality	2, 265	1.91	M = 1 = 0
Reciprocity	2, 284	2.28	M = 1 = 0
Kind of Relationship	4	22.76**	0 > 1,M for Peers M > 1,0 for Other Adults
Kind of Support	10	.09	M = 1 = 0

[a] No Involvement (0); One Involvement (1); Multiple Involvements (M).

[b] χ^2 Values follow df's of single numbers only.

[c] Newman-Keuls or One-Way χ^2 for follow-up test.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Relative Percentage Contribution of SES, Grade Level, and Involvement To Academic Grades

	Variable		
Order	X_1 SES	X_2 Grade Level	X_3 Involvement
$X_1X_2X_3$	70.72	12.58	16.70
$X_1X_3X_2$	70.70	7.53	21.77
$X_2X_1X_3$	65.65	17.38	16.97
$X_2X_3X_1$	2.40	30.98	66.63
$X_3X_1X_2$	45.95	7.53	46.52
$X_3X_2X_1$	45.10	8.39	46.51
Mean %	50.09	14.07	35.85

Table 5

Differences in the Experience of and Performance in the School by SES, Sex, Grade, and Involvement

Variable	Effect			
	SES	Sex	Grade	Involvement
Satisfaction				
General	*	N.S.	**	**
Teachers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	**
Goals	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	*
Peers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	*
How School is Run	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	**
Guidance	N.S.	N.S.	**	N.S.
Overall Evaluation	**	N.S.	N.S.	**
Influence				
School Board	**	N.S.	N.S.	**
Administration	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	**
Principal	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	**
Teachers	N.S.	N.S.	**	**
Students	N.S.	N.S.	**	N.S.
Parents	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Taxpayers	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Unions	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Perceived Involvement				
Actual	N.S.	N.S.	*	**
Ideal	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	**
Congruence	N.S.	N.S.	*	**
Adaptive Role	**	N.S.	N.S.	**

Table 5

(Continued)

Variable	Effect			
	SES	Sex	Grade	Involvement
Academic Performance Grades	**	N.S.	**	**
Honor Roll	**	*	**	**
College Plans	**	N.S.	**	**
Social Network Multidimensionality	*	*	N.S.	N.S.
Instrumentality	N.S.	*	N.S.	N.S.
Reciprocity	N.S.	**	N.S.	N.S.
Kind of Relationship	N.S.	*	**	**
Kind of Support	N.S.	**	N.S.	N.S.

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

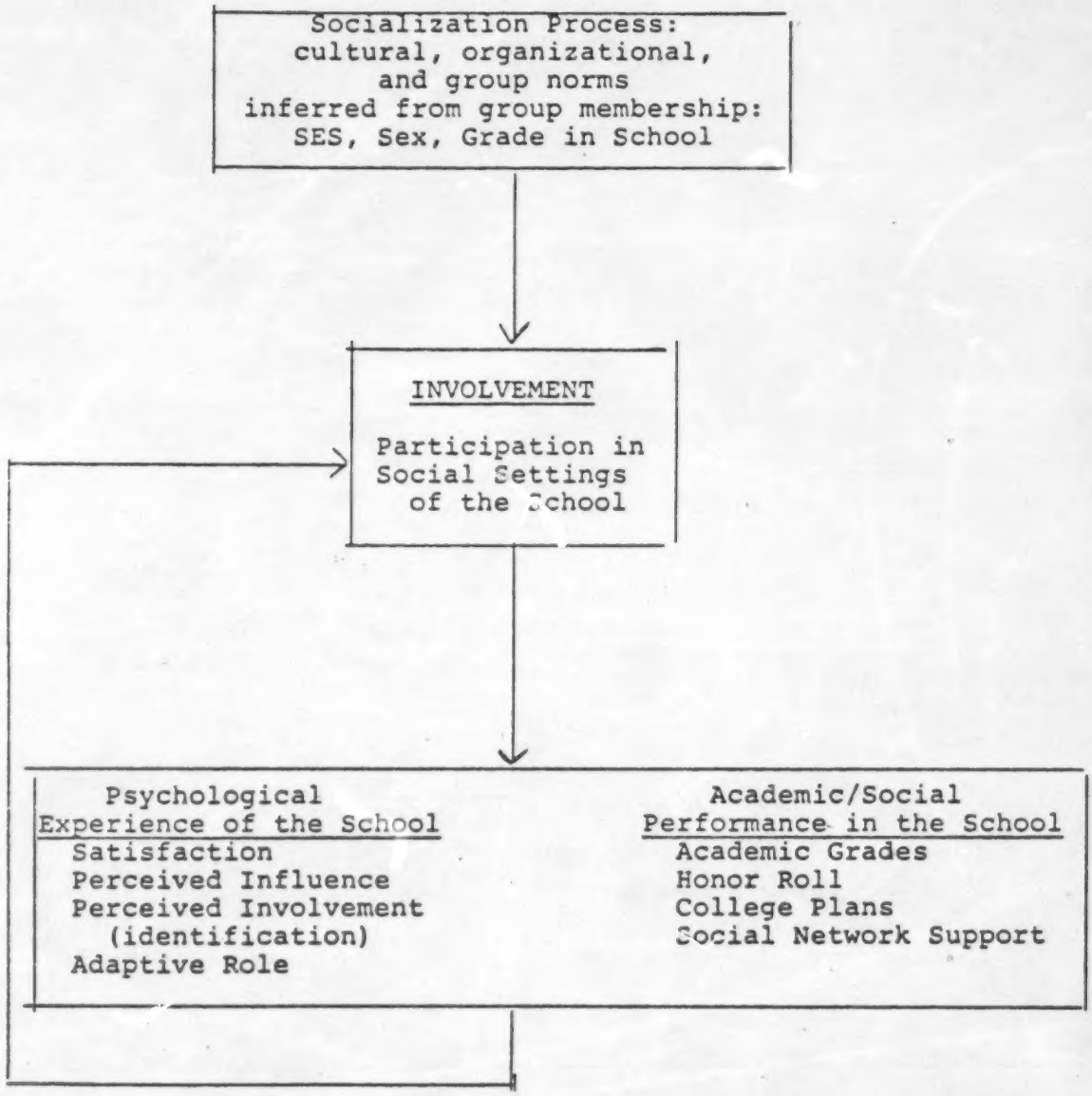

Figure 1. A conceptual model of the mediating role of high school involvement.